

Annex 3: Audits

Raj.27.1012

Review of ICES Scientific Report, *WGEF/Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes* (2021) (15-24 June)

Reviewer: Bárbara Serra Pereira

Expert group Chair: Jurgen Batsleer & Pascal Lorange

Secretariat representative: Iñigo Martinez

General

- Category 3 stock: advice for rays and skates in subareas 10 and 12 mainly based on survey index for *Raja clavata*, which represents around 90% of the skates caught in the Azorean demersal bottom longline survey; the species composition in commercial skate landings is unknown.
- No survey conducted in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions; index A based only on 2019.
- Length-base indicators (LBIs) reported from WKLIFEV were explored; the MSY proxy results show that exploitation for this stock is below the MSY level.
- There are no fisheries targeting skates on the MAR (ICES subareas 10, 12 and 14) with sporadic landings in recent years.
- Discarding is known to take place, but not quantified.
- No Stock Annex is available for this stock.

For single-stock summary sheet advice

raj.27.1012

Short description of the assessment as follows (examples in grey text):

1. Assessment type: category 3.
2. Assessment: accepted.
3. Forecast: NA, precautionary approached applied.
4. Assessment model: Azorean demersal bottom longline survey-based trends for thorn-back ray.
5. Consistency: following the advice rule for category 3, but considering only 1 recent year (2019). No survey conducted in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions.
6. Stock status: Unknown (information to define reference points are not available).
7. Management plan: There is no management plan available.

General comments

- The draft report section for this stock was available at time of the audit and contain all the information referred in the advice sheet.
- The PA buffer was last applied in 2019, therefore not applied this year.
- Although with some gaps in the data series and with lower levels than those observed between 2002 and 2007, the stock status has been relatively stable in the last 12 years.
- Catches kept at low levels, 2/3 of the advice.
- Stock with no TAC

Technical comments

- No survey conducted in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions; index A based only on one year (2019).
- The rounding was corrected according to ICES rules (applying to Tables 1,7 and 8)
- Suggestion: mention to the no TAC for this stock could be added to the report.

Conclusions

The assessment was carried out according to ICES guidelines for category-3 stocks. Minor corrections made to the advice in the audit, including update of values according to ICES rounding rules.

Some comments in the advice sheet still to be addressed by the secretariat:

- Figure 1 abundance index should be updated to include 2 orange lines (2019 and 2016-2018).

Rjh.27.4c7d

Review of ICES Scientific Report, (WGEF/Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes) (2021) (15-24 June)

Reviewer: Loïc Baulier

Expert group Chair: Jurgen Batsleer & Pascal Lorange

Secretariat representative: Iñigo Martinez

General

Last time advice for rjh.27.4c7d was requested was in 2019. The advice for this year applies to 2022-2023. It is currently assessed as a Category-3 stock.

The stock size index used for assessment is based on the CGFS-Q4 survey (G3425). As this survey was only partially carried out in 2020, the trend of the index was calculated as the ratio of the 2019 index over the average of the previous 5 years instead of the last 2 years' average over the previous 5 years' average).

This stock is managed under a combined TAC, which was not agreed upon at the time of plenary. No stock annex is available for this stock.

For single-stock summary sheet advice

rjh.27.4c7d (Blonde ray (*Raja brachyura*) in divisions 4.c and 7.d (southern North Sea and eastern English Channel)

Short description of the assessment as follows (examples in grey text):

1. Assessment type: Category 3 assessment
2. Assessment: Accepted
3. Forecast: NA, precautionary approached applied
4. Assessment model: Category-3 stock, based on landings. Discards are unknown.
5. Consistency: following the advice rule for category 3 with not deviation from the advice rule.
6. Stock status: Unknown (information to define reference points are not available). No Stock Status table used this year in the advice.
7. Management plan: There is no management plan available.

General comments

The precautionary buffer was last applied in 2019 and its application was therefore not considered this year.

No errors detected in the advice sheet, the rounding was applied according to ICES rules.

Technical comments

The spatial coverage of the CGFS-Q4 (G3425) was partial in 2020 (no sampling in British waters). Hence, the stock size index for this year was deemed not representative and was not used in the assessment.

As only one survey is used to derive the stock size indicator, the index time series was not standardized. For the sake of clarity, the index is expressed in thousands tonnes in Figure 1.

Conclusions

The assessment was carried out according to ICES guidelines for category-3 stocks.

Sdv.27.nea

Review of ICES Scientific Report, (*WGEF/Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes*) (2021) (15-24 June)

Reviewers: Katinka Bleeker

Expert group Chair: Jurgen Batsleer & Pascal Lorange

Secretariat representative: Iñigo Martinez

General

- Category 3 stock with last time advice was requested, was in 2019. The advice for this year applies to 2022-2023.
- Species-specific landings are unreliable, and are combined at genus level. Landings prior to 2005 are uncertain, but landings appear to have been reported more consistently in recent years.
- There is no TAC for this species
- Discarding is known to take place, but ICES cannot quantify the corresponding dead catch.
- No stock annex is available for this stock
- The stock size indicator is now based on five surveys, instead of three, following recommendation of WSKATE (increasing the area covered within the stock unit).

For single-stock summary sheet advice

sdv.27.nea – Smooth-hound (*Mustelus* spp.) in subareas 1-10, 12, and 14 (the Northeast Atlantic and adjacent waters)

Short description of the assessment as follows:

1. Assessment type: category 3 update
2. Assessment: accepted
3. Forecast: NA, precautionary approached applied
4. Assessment model: Survey-based trends based on 5 surveys: NS-IBTS-Q1 (G1022), NS-IBTS-Q3 (G2829), EVHOE-WIBTS-Q4 (G9527), CGFS-Q4 (G3425) and IGFS-WIBTS-Q4 (G7212).

5. Consistency: following the advice rule for category 3 with no deviation from the advice rule.
6. Stock status: Unknown (information to define reference points are not available).
7. Management plan: ICES is not aware of any agreed precautionary management plan for smooth-hound in this area.

General comments

- The draft report section for this stock was available at the time of the audit and contained all the information referred in the advice sheet.
- The precautionary buffer was last applied in 2015, and has, therefore been considered again.

Technical comments

- The spatial coverage of the CGFS-Q4 was partial in 2020, as only the French waters of the English Channel were sampled. There is little evidence of an impact on the overall stock size indicator for starry smooth-hound. Therefore, the survey index for 2020 for this survey has been used in the assessment.

Conclusions

The assessment was carried out according to ICES guidelines for category 3 stocks.

Syc.27.3a47d

Review of ICES Scientific Report, (WGEF/Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes) (2021) (15-24 June)

Reviewer: Loïc Baulier

Expert group Chair: Jurgen Batsleer & Pascal Lorange

Secretariat representative: Iñigo Martinez

General

Last time advice for syc.27.3a47d was requested was in 2019. The advice for this year applies to 2022-2023. It is currently assessed as a Category-3 stock.

The stock size index used for assessment is based on five surveys: .NS-IBTS-Q1 (G1022), NS-IBTS-Q3 (G2829) (these two indices are average prior to combination with the other indices), BTS-Eng-Q3 (G2453), CGFS Q4 (G3425) and BTS-BE-Q3 (G2453). The later survey was included for the derivation of the global index this year.

There is no TAC for this stock.

No stock annex is available for this stock.

For single-stock summary sheet advice

Lesser spotted dogfish (*Scyliorhinus canicula*) in Subarea 4 and in divisions 3.a and 7.d (North Sea, Skagerrak and Kattegat, eastern English Channel)

Short description of the assessment as follows (examples in grey text):

1. Assessment type: Category 3 assessment
2. Assessment : Accepted
3. Forecast: NA, precautionary approached applied
4. Assessment model: Category-3 stock, based on landings. Discards are unknown but suspected to represent a large part of the catch.

5. Consistency: following the advice rule for category 3 with not deviation from the advice rule. One survey added to derive the stock size indicator, compared to previous assessment.
6. Stock status: Unknown (information to define reference points are not available). No Stock Status table used this year in the advice.
7. Management plan: There is no management plan available.

General comments

The precautionary buffer was last applied in 2019 and its application was therefore not considered this year.

The rounding was applied according to ICES rules.

The reference of the WSKATE report must be added to the list:

ICES. 2021a. Workshop on the use of surveys for stock assessment and reference points for rays and skates (WSKATE; outputs from 2020 meeting). ICES Scientific Reports. 3:23. 177 pp. <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.7948>

and the mentions to ICES 2021 (a,b, or c) in the text should be corrected accordingly

Technical comments

The spatial coverage of the CGFS-Q4 (G3425) was partial in 2020 (no sampling in British waters). Hence, the stock size index from CGFS-Q4 for this year was deemed not representative and was not used in the assessment.

The indices from the different surveys were normalized before being combined (arithmetic mean) to produce the stock size estimator. The two indices from NS-IBTS (Q1 and Q3) were first combined so that the combined NS-IBTS index has the same weight as any of the other survey indices.

In Quality of the assessment, the first sentence, as currently formulated, suggests that this stock was treated as a case study during WSKATE. This is not the case. However, the addition of the survey BE-BTS-Q3 to the calculation of the stock size index was considered by the WGEF on the basis of criteria defined during WSKATE. Details are provided in the Group's annual report. Suggestion: "Fishery-independent trawl surveys indices were updated and combined following ~~recommendation of the criteria defined during~~ WSKATE (ICES 2021a, c)

In Table 4, the mention "no TAC" should not appear for years 2022 and 2023

Conclusions

The assessment was carried out according to ICES guidelines for category-3 stocks, no errors appear in figures or rounding. Minor errors in the text are still to be corrected.

Syt.27.67

Review of ICES Scientific Report, *WGEF/Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes* (2021) (15-24 June)

Reviewer: Bárbara Serra Pereira

Expert group Chair: Jurgen Batsleer & Pascal Lorange

Secretariat representative: Iñigo Martinez

General

- Category 3 stock: advice for greater-spotted dogfish (*Scyliorhinus stellaris*) in subareas 6 and 7 (West of Scotland, southern Celtic Sea, and the English Channel).

- Landings and catch data are too unreliable to be used to advice on fishing opportunities. But an indication of the relative change in catch implied is provided.
- In recent years, landings data are improving, however, ICES is aware that data in the four last years are still incomplete. Discards and utilisation as pot bait are known to occur and are not quantified.
- The stock size indicator is based on 2 surveys: UK(E&W)–BTS–Q3 and CGFS–Q4. The latter was introduced in WGEF 2021 following the guidelines from WSKATE (the stock was not addressed on the workshop).
- In 2020 the area coverage of the UK(E&W)–BTS–Q3 survey was reduced due to COVID-19 restrictions (7.a not covered) and UK waters of the English Channel were not sampled during the CGFS–Q4 survey. Therefore, the 2020 indices were considered not representative for this stock, and index A was based only in 2019.
- Stock Annex is available for this stock but needs update to include the use of the new survey (CGFS–Q4).

For single-stock summary sheet advice

syt.27.67

Short description of the assessment as follows (examples in grey text):

1. Assessment type: category 3.
2. Assessment: accepted.
3. Forecast: NA, precautionary approached applied.
4. Assessment model: survey-based trends, using a standardized biomass index of exploitable biomass: average of standardized indices from UK(E&W)–BTS–Q3 in divisions 7.a and 7.f in Kg.hr^{-1} and CGFS–Q4 in Division 7.d in Kg.km^{-2} .
5. Consistency: following the advice rule for category 3 with no deviation from the advice rule.
6. Stock status: Unknown (information to define reference points are not available).
7. Management plan: There is no management plan available.

General comments

- The draft report section for this stock was available at time of the audit and contain all the information referred in the advice sheet.
- The basis for the advice was updated in 2021: i) inclusion of the CGFS–Q4, and ii) use of exploitable biomass instead of total biomass indexes; both updates followed the WSKATE guidelines.
- A sentence stating the update of the basis of the assessment was lacking from the section ‘Quality of the assessment’. A suggested sentence was added, formulated based on other stocks.
- Overall increasing trend in the biomass indicator since the beginning of the series, oscillating around a standardized mean value of 1.3 in the last 6 years.
- The PA buffer was last applied in 2017, and has, therefore, been considered and applied in 2021 (stock status relative to candidate reference points is unknown.)
- Stock with no TAC; catsharks are not subject to species-specific fisheries management measures in EU waters.

Technical comments

- In 2020 the area coverage of the UK(E&W)–BTS–Q3 survey was reduced due to COVID-19 restrictions (7.a not covered) and UK waters of the English Channel were not sampled during the CGFS-Q4 survey; index A based only on one year (2019).
- Although landings and catches are considered unreliable, a figure with the landings since 2005 is presented as auxiliary information in the section ‘Quality of the assessment’.
- Sentence from “Issues relevant for the advice” incomplete. Added text according to other catsharks sheets (i.e., “retained as low-value bycatch”; confirm if true for this stock).
- Table 4 – advice for 2022 refer to a decrease in 4% but should be read 18%.
- Added two references used in the section ‘Quality of the assessment’ (i.e., WSKATE and 2019 Advice Sheet). ICES, 2021 references reordered.
- Added footnote to explain NA value in 2020.
- The rounding was corrected according to ICES rules (applying to Tables 1 and 6)

Conclusions

The assessment was carried out according to ICES guidelines for category-3 stocks. Minor corrections made to the advice in the audit, including update of values according to ICES rounding rules and sentence added to ‘Quality of the assessment’ describing the updated of the basis for the assessment.

Stock Annex needs to be updated to include the use of CGFS-Q4.

Gag.27.nea

Review of ICES Scientific Report: Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes (WGEF), on line meeting, 15-24 June 2021.

Reviewers: Gérard Biais

Expert group Chair: Jurgen Batsleer and Pascal Lorance

Secretariat representative: Inigo Martinez and Jette Fredslund

General

- Cat 5 stock.
- No TAC, only some gear prohibitions (longlines, rod and lines).
- Large French contribution to total landing (75–80% in 2019 and 2020).
- Limited information on discards.
- No reliable abundance index series.
- A stock annex is currently missing.

For single-stock summary sheet advice

Stock: Tope (*Galeorhinus galeus*) in subareas 1–10, 12 and 14 (gag.27.nea)

Short description of the assessment as follows:

1. Assessment type: update, category 5 stock.
2. Assessment: No assessment.
3. Forecast: NA. Precautionary buffer applied in 2019; therefore, not applied in 2021.
4. Assessment model: not applicable.
5. Consistency: cat 5 with no deviation from the advice rule.
6. Stock status: Unknown (and no information on biomass trend).

7. Management plan: None for this stock.

General comments: none.

Technical comments

The causes of decreasing trend in Spanish landings from 2010 to 2015 should be commented as well as the large fluctuations of French landings before 1987.

The possibility to obtain an abundance index using commercial CPUE should be investigated.

Conclusions

The advice follows the rule for category 5. Same landings advised as in previous advice issued in 2019.

Raj.27.3a47d

Review of ICES Scientific Report, (*WGEF/ Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes*) (2021) (15-24 June)

Reviewer: Laura Lemey

Expert group Chair: Jurgen Batsleer and Pascal Lorance

Secretariat representative: Inigo Martinez and Jette Fredslund

General

For single-stock summary sheet advice

Raj.27.3a47d (Rays and skates (Rajidae) in Subarea 4 and in divisions 3.a and 7.d (North Sea, Skagerrak, Kattegat and eastern English Channel)

Short description of the assessment as follows:

1. Assessment type: Update assessment
2. Assessment: No assessment
3. Forecast: No forecast
4. Assessment model: No assessment
5. Consistency: Consistent, similar to last year ICES cannot provide catch advice for these stocks due to a lack of reliable survey and catch data. Revised recent landings (ICES, 2016) are not considered reliable to provide advice because of progressive changes in the level of species-specific reporting.
6. Stock status: Unknown
7. Management plan: ICES is not aware of any agreed precautionary management plan for skates and rays in this area.

General comments

Landings data for 2017 and 2018 have been updated, as revised Danish data was supplied.

Technical comments

Suggestions were made in the advice sheet using track changes.

Conclusions

ICES cannot perform stock assessments nor provide catch advice for these stocks due to a lack of reliable survey and catch data.

Rjc.27.3a47d

Review of ICES Scientific Report, (WGEF/ Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes) (2021) (15-24 June)

Reviewer: Laura Lemey

Expert group Chair: Jurgen Batsleer and Pascal Lorange

Secretariat representative: Inigo Martinez and Jette Fredslund

General

For single-stock summary sheet advice

Rjc.27.3a47d (Thornback ray (*Raja clavata*) in Subarea 4 and in divisions 3.a and 7.d (North Sea, Skagerrak, Kattegat, and eastern English Channel)

Short description of the assessment as follows:

1. Assessment type: Update assessment
2. Assessment: Category 3 assessment
3. Forecast: No forecast
4. Assessment model: Category 3 assessment applying two over five rule to the stock size indicator. Stock size indicator calculated using 5 surveys. The stock size biomass indicator ratio showed an increasing trend.
5. Consistency: Following the advice rule for category 3 stock with no deviation from the advice rule. One survey added to derive the stock size indicator, compared to previous assessments. CGFS-Q4 2020 data point was not included in the stock size index.
6. The species- specific landings data are incomplete prior to 2009, so have not been incorporated in this advice.
7. Stock status: Unknown (information to define reference points are not available).
8. Management plan: ICES is not aware of any agreed precautionary management plan for thornback ray in this area.

General comments

The precautionary buffer was last applied in 2019 and its application was therefore not considered this year.

Technical comments

Fisheries- independent trawl survey indices were updated and combined, following recommendations of WSKATE¹. The stock size indicator is based on five surveys, now including the BE-BTS-Q3, instead of four, which cover most of the stock area.

¹ ICES. 2021a. Workshop on the use of surveys for stock assessment and reference points for rays and skates (WSKATE; outputs from 2020 meeting). ICES Scientific Reports. 3:23. 177 pp. <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.7948>

The two indices from NS-IBTS (Q1-Q3) were combined so that the combined NS-IBTS index has the same weight as any of the other survey indices.

In 2020, the spatial coverage of the CGFS-Q4 focused only on the French waters of the English Channel, which impacted the CGFS- Q4 index for 2020. Therefore, the 2020 CGFS-Q4 indices were considered not to be representative for this stock.

Suggestions were made in the advice sheet using track changes.

Conclusions

The assessment has been performed correctly, following ICES guidance for assessing data limited stocks. Minor comments were made in the advice sheet. Please check unrounded calculation in Table 1 and follow rounding rules.

Rjh.27.4a6

Review of ICES Scientific Report, (*expert group/workshop title*) (*year*) (*dates*)

Reviewers: Inigo Martinez

Expert group Chair: Pascal Lorange and Jurgen Batsleer

Secretariat representative: Inigo Martinez

General

- Cat 5 stock.
- Blonde ray is managed under a combined TAC. TAC not agreed at time of plenary
- LBIs for blonde ray could be try but may be problematic. It is data limited, with potential ID issues with spotted rays, bycatch may take more small blonde ray, seasonal/localised target fisheries likely to take larger blonde rays, so depending on data collection, underlying data for LBIs would not be informative...
- No Stock Annex is available for this stock.

For single-stock summary sheet advice

Rjh.27.4a6

Short description of the assessment as follows (examples in grey text):

1. Assessment type: cat 5
2. Assessment: no assessment
3. Forecast: NA but PAB applied on the catch options table
4. Assessment model: cat 5. i.e. assessment based on catches only. No discards used.
5. Consistency: following the advice rule for cat 5 with not deviation from the advice rule.
6. Stock status: Unknown (information to define reference points are not available). No SSTable used this year in the advice.
7. Management plan: There is no management plan available

General comments:

The precautionary buffer was last applied in 2018. Because there is no information on stock size or fishing pressure, the precautionary buffer was applied again in 2021.

Catches are ca. 3 times the advice (which is still low).

TAC form UK not agreed: what standard sentence. Need to fill at later date

Technical comments

Supporting graph to Issues: Stock size indicator of total biomass from two trawl surveys (NS-IBTS-Q1 and IGFS-WIBTS-Q4) relative to the time-series mean (2005-2020) but not considered indicative of trends.

Conclusions

Rounding need to be applied to the new calculated catch 7.2 => 7 tonnes

Rjm.27.3a47d

Review of ICES Scientific Report, (WGEF/ Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes) (2021) (15-24 June)

Reviewer: Graham Johnston

Expert group Chair: Jurgen Batsleer and Pascal Lorange

Secretariat representative: Inigo Martinez and Jette Fredslund

For single-stock summary sheet advice

Rjm.27.3a47d Spotted ray (*Raja montagui*) in Subarea 4 and in divisions 3.a and 7.d (North Sea, Skagerrak, Kattegat, and eastern English Channel)

Short description of the assessment as follows:

1. Assessment type: Update assessment
2. Assessment: Category 3 assessment
3. Forecast: No forecast
4. Assessment model: Category 3 assessment applying two over five rule to the stock size indicator. Stock size indicator calculated using 2 surveys. The stock size biomass indicator ratio showed a decreasing trend.
5. Consistency: Following the advice rule for category 3 stock with no deviation from the advice rule.
6. The species- specific landings data are incomplete prior to 2009, so have not been incorporated in this advice.
7. Stock status: Unknown (information to define reference points are not available).
8. Management plan: ICES is not aware of any agreed precautionary management plan for spotted ray in this area.

General comments

The precautionary buffer was applied this year.

Technical comments

The mean of exploitable biomass from two surveys is used. There seems to be some confusion over whether these were normalised in the past, but it is stated that they have not been here. This follows the recommendation from WWSKATE. The comment discussing this is left in the advice sheet for clarity to the ADG.

Suggestions were made in the advice sheet using track changes.

Conclusions

The assessment has been performed correctly, following ICES guidance for assessing data limited stocks. Minor comments were made in the advice sheet. Numbers are correct, but have now been rounded.

Rjn.27.3a4

Review of ICES Scientific Report, (WGEF/ Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes) (2021) (15-24 June)

Reviewer: Cristina Rodríguez-C abello

Expert group Chair: Jurgen Batsleer and Pascal Lorange

Secretariat representative: Inigo Martinez and Jette Fredslund

General

The first figure only shows landings although discards are available. A general discussion arised looking at discards table. As it happens with other elasmobranchs stocks there are gaps among countries and years and overall a very high interannual variation. These precludes the use of discards as are not considered total reliable.

A discussion arised regarding the index used for the stock indicator. Two options were presented, using the exploitable biomass (> 50 cm) or total biomass. Some comments were also made regarding the possibility of changing the explotable biomass length (40 cm instead of 50 cm). WSKATES had not a clear answer to that point. Some of the arguments discussed were to have an index comparable to fishery but others suggest to look at the length frequency of the survey and take into account other surveys for choosing a standard length as exploitable biomass.

Other important general issue that came about was regarding how to procced for obtaining confidence intervals when more than a survey index is combined.

For single stock summary sheet advice:

1. Assessment type: Update
2. Assessment: Survey-based trends
3. Forecast: Not presented
4. Assessment model: Surveys stock indicator (2 years vs 5 years rule)
5. Data issues: Two surveys were usually used to provide advice NS IBTS-Q1 and NS IBTS-Q3. However the netherlans survey index is also available There are discards data available but are highly variable and thus considered not reliable to include.
6. Consistency: Consistent
7. Stock status: Unknown. The stock size biomass indicator showed a decresing trend
8. Management Plan: No management plan

General comments

The assessment is similar to other elasmobranch stocks showed in the WG. The surveys index and data used were presented and discussed.

Technical comments

Landings in 2009 are very low (Figure 1). This is due to the fact that there was a larger time series of landings however until 2009 it started to be species-specific.

Advice sheet:

- Landings were review and updated on tables 4 and 6
- Legend and symbols on table 6 were modified to be consistent with tables from other stocks. "ICES estimates of landings by country (in tonnes). Blank = no data reported; + = data less than 0.5 t."
- Table 7. Instead of including each survey index (Q1 and Q3) the standardized average of both index (the stock size indicator) was included.

Conclusions

The assessment has been performed correctly and all requested information is provided in the advice sheet

Checklist for audit process

General aspects

- Has the EG answered those TORs relevant to providing advice? Yes
- Is the assessment according to the stock annex description? Yes
- If a management plan is used as the basis of the advice, has been agreed to by the relevant parties and has the plan been evaluated by ICES to be precautionary? There is not a management plan.
- Have the data been used as specified in the stock annex? Yes
- Has the assessment, recruitment and forecast model been applied as specified in the stock annex?
- Is there any **major** reason to deviate from the standard procedure for this stock? No
- Does the update assessment give a valid basis for advice? If not, suggested what other basis should be sought for the advice? Yes. The advised landings have been reduced (-36%) because the biomass indicator has decreased and both the uncertainty cap and precautionary buffer were applied

Sho.27.67

Review of ICES Scientific Report, (WGEF/Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes) (2021) (15-24 June)

Reviewers: Thomas Barreau

Expert group Chair: Jurgen Batsleer & Pascal Lorance

Secretariat representative: Iñigo Martinez

General

Recommendations, general remarks for expert groups, etc. (use bullet points and subheadings if needed)

Last catch advice for this stock was request in 2017 as it was not requested in 2019. The lack of reference point did not allow to assess the stock relatively to maximum sustainable yield (MSY). The advice is only based on one survey the Spanish SpPGFS-WIBTS-Q4 survey (G5768) using a biomass indicator in kg hr⁻¹.

After discussion during the meeting, landings data have not been used as some data seems not accurate especially in 2006 and landings are not reported at the species level, consequently landings are considered unreliable. Discard data were not considered as reliable either.

There is no TAC for this species.

No Stock Annex is available for this stock.

For single-stock summary sheet advice

Blackmouth dogfish (*Galeus melastomus*) in subareas 6 and 7 (West of Scotland, southern Celtic Seas, and English Channel)

Short description of the assessment as follows (examples in grey text):

1. Assessment type: Cat 3
2. Assessment: Accepted
3. Forecast: Not presented but PA buffer applied on catch scenarios table
4. Assessment model: Category-3 stock assessment based on biomass indicator calculated on one survey (SpPGFS-WIBTS-Q4 survey (G5768)) rules of the 2 years vs 5 years was used. No landings and no discards used.
5. Consistency: following the advice rule for cat 3 with not deviation from the advice rule.
6. Stock status: Unknown. Lack of a reference point. No Stock Status table used this year in the advice.
7. Management plan: There is no management plan available.

General comments

The precautionary buffer was last apply in 2017. Because there is no information on stock size or fishing pressure, it has been apply in 2021. As no reliable data on current catch are available and no catch advice have been given, advice change have been set as "NA".

Technical comments

- Landings plot must be removed in section "Stock development over time" as data are unreliable.
- Ordinate label of the plot "Stock Size" must be changed in kg/hr in section "Stock development over time".
- As only one survey was used, the working group decided to not normalized the index.
- Indicated that last precautionary approach was applied in 2017 in section "Catch Scenario".
- Add a comment on "% Advice change ***" such as "No catch advice given since 2017" or "Because landings or catches are not known, ICES cannot provide advice on fishing opportunities but provides an indication of the relative change in catch implied." in Table 1.
- Replace tables in section "History of the catch and landings" by a sentence such as "All catches data are believed to be un reliable".
- ICES rounding must be applied to the table 8.

Conclusions

The assessment has been performed correctly and all requested information is provided in the advice sheet.

Sho.27.89a

Review of ICES Scientific Report, (*WGEF/Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes*) (2021) (15-24 June)

Reviewers: Joana Silva

Expert group Chair: Jurgen Batsleer & Pascal Lorange

Secretariat representative: Iñigo Martinez

General

- This species is typically discarded or retained as low-value bycatch.

- Landings data are not fully reliable for this species, as some may be reported in generic categories (e.g. 'dogfish') and, misidentification issues are also likely to occur, especially in Division 9.a where the congener *Galeus atlanticus* also occurs.
- Discards are not fully quantified, and their discard survivability is currently unknown.

For single-stock summary sheet advice

sho.27.89a - Black-mouthed dogfish (*Galeus melastomus*) in Subarea 8 and Division 9.a (Bay of Biscay and Atlantic Iberian waters)

Short description of the assessment as follows:

1. Assessment type: Update (Category-3 stock).
2. Assessment: Accepted.
3. Forecast: Not applicable.
4. Assessment model: Survey-based trends based on four trawl surveys EVHOE-WIBTS-Q4, PT-CTS(UWTV(FU 28–29)), SpGFS-GC-WIBTS-Q1, and SpGFS-GC-WIBTS-Q4.
5. Consistency: Consistent with previous advice.
6. Stock status: Unknown (reference points are not defined due to lack of information).
7. Management plan: ICES is not aware of any agreed precautionary management plan for this stock.

General comments

- ICES has not been requested to provide advice on fishing opportunities for this stock.
- There is a stock annex available with minor review to be followed up intersessionally.

Technical comments

- PT-CTS(UWTV(FU 28–29)) survey was not conducted in 2019 and 2020 (the latter due to COVID-19 restrictions) with stock size indicator for those years as the mean of the remaining surveys. During WGEF meeting options with and without this survey were presented (Moura *et al.*, 2021 WD²) and, with little impact shown in the stock size indicator, an agreement was reached to continue to include this survey. However, a second SAG template was made available without this survey to the ADGEF. Raw data available on WGEF 2019 sharepoint.
- The survey code for PT-CTS(UWTV(FU 28–29)) as D2913 was highlighted throughout the advice sheet by the stock assessor to be incorrect since this is not a dredge survey, it would need to be corrected on the database by ICES.
- EVHOE-WIBTS-Q4 survey index was updated in 2021 for the whole time-series following methodology presented during WSKATE. Previous advice was based on national data, with advice in 2021 based on data available on DATRAS.
- SpGFS-GC-WIBTS-Q1 and SpGFS-GC-WIBTS-Q4 were averaged before normalized by their long-term mean. Data to be uploaded accordingly by stock assessor to the sharepoint.
- Issue found on the stock size indicator for 2012 and 2017, table on advice sheet corrected, with SAG files and stock size indicator graph to be updated on the advice sheet, and report section also to be updated. Stock assessor has been informed and will revise accordingly prior to the ADGEF.

² Moura, T., Rodríguez- Cabello, C., Díez, G., Serra-Pereira, B., Maia, C., Figueiredo, I. 2021. Effect of the Portuguese surveys in the assessment of catsharks syc.27.8c9a and sho.27.89a. Working Document (WD 05) presented to ICES WGEF 15-24 June 2021; 8 pp.

Conclusions

The assessment was carried out according ICES guidelines for data-limited stocks. Minor corrections were made to the advice sheet during the audit, including update of values according to ICES rounding rules. Other updates will be carried out by stock assessor prior to the ADGEF.

Syc.27.8abd

Review of ICES Scientific Report, (*WGEF/Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes*) (2021) (15-24 June)

Reviewers: Pascal Lorange

Expert group Chair: Jurgen Batsleer & Pascal Lorange

Secretariat representative: Iñigo Martinez

General

- The last advice for this stock was published in 2019. Both in 2019 and 2021 CES was not requested to provide advice on fishing opportunities whilst a catch advice was provided in 2017.
- There is no stock annex for this stock.
- The assessment was based on the same survey (EVHOE-WIBTS-Q4) as the three previous assessments published in 2015, 2017 and 2019. Following WSKATE, data from DATRAS were used in 2021 instead of national data previously and this makes some change in the biomass index, although the overall stock trajectory remains the same.
- Landings and discards have been used since 2017 and are deemed reliable.

For single-stock summary sheet advice

Stock: syc.27.8abd

Short description of the assessment:

1. Assessment type: ICES stock category 3, update
2. Assessment: accepted
3. Forecast: NA
4. Assessment model: None (survey trend only)
5. Consistency: consistent with previous assessment, survey data now using DATRAS induced minor changes.
6. Stock status: NA
7. Management plan: NA

General comments

Although there is no stock annex, the assessments have been carried out using the same survey data since 2015 and catch data since 2017. Changes are technical (moving from national data to DATRAS, which facilitates transparency). The assessment method may then be considered as stabilized and should be subject to writing a stock annex after the use of survey data is reviewed by the next WSKATE workshop, recommended by WGEF.

Technical comments

ADGEF 2019 noted in the minutes "Need to check that the discard data does not include area 9a". Discards included in the 2021 draft advice are actually for 8abd. In the recommended that

table in the report as amended so to provide time-series of discards by stocks not just by species as currently done (tables 25.2a and 25.2b in WGEF report).

Conclusions

The assessment has been carried out consistently for several years. Catch and survey data are reliable. A stock annex is needed before the next assessment (2023).

Syc.27.8c9a

Review of ICES Scientific Report, (*expert group/workshop title*) (*year*) (*dates*)

Reviewers: Pascal Lorange

Expert group Chair: Jurgen Batsleer & Pascal Lorange

Secretariat representative: Iñigo Martinez

General

- The last advice for this stock was published in 2019. Both in 2019 and 2021 CES was not requested to provide advice on fishing opportunities whilst a catch advice was provided in 2017.
- There is no stock annex for this stock.
- Landings have been used since 2017 and are deemed reliable.

For single-stock summary sheet advice

Stock: syc.27.8c9a

Short description of the assessment:

1. Assessment type: ICES stock category 3, update
2. Assessment: accepted
3. Forecast: NA
4. Assessment model: None (survey trend only)
5. Consistency: The advice is based on the same data since 2017 (survey trends for 4 surveys and landings).
6. Stock status: NA
7. Management plan: NA

General comments

- The last advice for this stock was published in 2019. Both in 2019 and 2021 CES was not requested to provide advice on fishing opportunities whilst a catch advice was provided in 2017.
- For this stock survey data from national database are used, which lack transparency. This should be changed to using DATRAS, probably some work to plan for the next WWSKATE workshop.
- The index used is fully consistent since 2017 (standardized Biomass indicator). In the previous advice, confidence intervals were shown and are no longer this year, as the calculation applied was not correct.
- Only landings are used not discards. Discards are noted unknown in the draft advice. The report provides some discard data, which are incomplete for one country as "*estimates for the [Portuguese] artisanal fleet are not available*". However, discards estimates are of little interest for assessment and advice of the species because survival is unknown and most probably variable according to gear and season

Technical comments

Although there is no stock annex, the assessments has been carried out using the same survey data since 2015 and landings data since 2017 (so assessment method is stabilized and should be subject to writing a stock annex after the use of survey data is reviewed by the next WSKATE workshop, recommended by WGEF). Work is needed to estimate confidence interval of the combined survey index and to used DATRAS which would allow moving to stock to TAF (this is not specific to this stock and applies to all WGEF stocks). The assessment method may then be considered as.

Conclusions

The assessment has been carried out consistently for several years. Landings and survey data are reliable. A stock annex is needed before the next assessment (2023).

Syc.27.67a-ce-j

Review of ICES Scientific Report, (*WGEF/Working Group on Elasmobranch Fishes*) (2021) (15-24 June)

Reviewer: Thomas Barreau

Expert group Chair: Jurgen Batsleer & Pascal Lorange

Secretariat representative: Iñigo Martinez

General

Recommendations, general remarks for expert groups, etc. (use bullet points and subheadings if needed)

Last catch advice for this stock was request in 2019. The lack of reference point did not allow to assess the stock relatively to maximum sustainable yield (MSY).

The advice is based on four surveys EVHOE-WIBTS-Q4 (G9527), IGFS-WIBTS-Q4 (G7212), SpPGFS-WIBTS-Q4 (G5768), UK(E&W)-BTS-Q3 (B6596) using a relative index. Index for UK(E&W)-BTS-Q3 (B6596) in 2020 were not used as this survey did not cover area 7a due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The total biomass has been used in this advice as the smaller individual can be retained for bait. Landings appear to be relatively stable since 2007, data presented do not include generic selling names.

Discards data were not used as they are not fully quantified and are variable between fleets.

There is no TAC for this species.

No Stock Annex is available for this stock.

For single-stock summary sheet advice

Lesser spotted dogfish (*Scyliorhinus canicula*) in Subarea 6 and divisions 7.a-c and 7.e-j (West of Scotland, Irish Sea, southern Celtic Seas)

Short description of the assessment as follows (examples in grey text):

1. Assessment type: Cat 3
2. Assessment: Accepted
3. Forecast: Not presented.
4. Assessment model: Category-3 stock assessment based on relative indicator calculated on four surveys (EVHOE-WIBTS-Q4 (G9527), IGFS-WIBTS-Q4 (G7212),

SpPGFS–WIBTS–Q4 (G5768), UK(E&W)–BTS–Q3 (B6596)) rules of the 2 years vs 5 years was used. Landings were presented but not discards.

5. Consistency: following the advice rule for cat 3 with not deviation from the advice rule
6. Stock status: Unknown. Lack of a reference point. No Stock Status table used this year in the advice.
7. Management plan: There is no management plan available.

General comments

The precautionary buffer was last applied in 2019 and its application was therefore not considered this year.

Discards are supposed to be similar at landings data but are not fully quantify

Technical comments

- Fisheries-independent trawl survey indices were updated and combined after been normalised. The stock size indicator is based on four surveys, which cover most of the stock area.
- It should be mention in figure 1 legend that data are based on Total biomass in section “Stock development over time”.
- Surveys’ codes are missing in figure 1 legend in section “Stock development over time”.
- Graph on discard must be added in section “Issues relevant for the advice”.

Conclusions

The assessment has been performed correctly and all requested information is provided in the advice sheet.